

# Department of Justice

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Central District of Illinois

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## **Two Urbana Men Charged with Armed Robberies and Firearms Offenses**

Urbana, Ill. – Two Urbana, Ill., men made their initial appearances in federal court this week on armed robbery and gun charges related to several area robberies this spring. The indictment was returned on Sept. 19, but had remained sealed pending initial court appearances on Wednesday, Oct. 3. Prentice A. Taylor, 57, and William T. Jackson, 34, appeared before U.S. Magistrate Judge David G. Bernthal. Both were ordered to remain detained in the custody of the U.S. Marshals Service and trial was scheduled for Dec. 10, 2012.

The indictment alleges that on Mar. 24, 2012, Taylor robbed the McDonald's located at 501 N. Mattis Ave, in Champaign, and brandished a firearm. Taylor and Jackson are both charged with committing a robbery of the Mobil Super Pantry, 1511 North Prospect, in Champaign on Apr. 16, 2012. Both are also charged with robbing the Central Illinois Credit Union at 2106 W. John St. in Champaign on May 8, 2012. A firearm was also allegedly brandished during that robbery. Jackson is charged with a separate bank robbery at Marine Bank on May 21, 2012, where a gun was allegedly brandished.

The nine count indictment charges Taylor with two counts of obstruction of commerce by robbery, commonly known as the Hobbs Act; bank robbery (one count;) brandishing a firearm during a robbery (two counts;) and one count of possession of a firearm by a felon. Jackson is charged with one count of robbery / Hobbs Act; two counts of bank robbery, one count of brandishing a firearm during a robbery and one count of possession of a firearm by a felon.

If convicted, each count of robbery (Hobbs Act) carries a maximum penalty of up to 20 years in prison; bank robbery carries a maximum penalty of 25 years in prison and possession of a firearm by a felon carries a penalty of up to 10 years in prison. For brandishing a firearm, the first conviction carries a mandatory term of seven years in prison and a mandatory term of 25 years for a second conviction to be served consecutive to any term of imprisonment imposed by the court for the underlying robbery and bank robbery offenses.

The charges were investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Champaign Police Department. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Ronda H. Coleman.

Members of the public are reminded that an indictment is merely an accusation; each defendant is presumed innocent unless proven guilty.

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